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USIB-D-71. 4/3
29 August 1968

UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

MEMORANDUM FOR THE UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

SUBJECT : Semi-Annual Report on the Community On-Line
Intelligence System (COINS) Experiment

REFERENCE : USIB-D-39. 7/27, 20 February 1968

1. The attached report on this subject from the Information Handling Committee (IHC) is circulated for information and noting by the Board. The reference document contains the last report on the COINS experiment circulated to the United States Intelligence Board (USIB).

2. The attached report is a revision of an earlier report on this subject, also dated 31 March, which was given only limited distribution in April 1968 by the IHC pending resolution of several problems.

3. It is not planned to schedule the attachment on the agenda of a USIB meeting unless so requested by a Board Member prior to close of business 9 September. In the absence of such a request it will be considered for record purposes that the USIB "noted" the subject report on that date

[Redacted Signature Box]

[Redacted Name Box] Executive Secretary

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Attachment

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100 cys of cover memo
to IHC Committee

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United States Intelligence Board
INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION HANDLING COMMITTEE
IHC-D-113.4/13

COINS

**Community On-line Intelligence System
Experiment**

COINS Committee
Semi-Annual Report
31 March 1968

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COINS COMMITTEE
Intelligence Information Handling
Committee
United States Intelligence Board

TO: Chairman
Intelligence Information Handling Committee

FROM: Chairman
Community On-Line Intelligence System
(COINS) Committee

SUBJECT: Semiannual Report

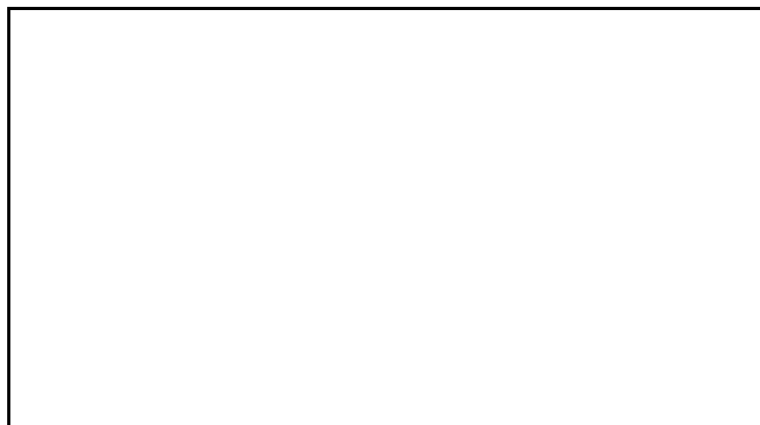
Submitted herewith for your consideration is the second semi-annual report on the COINS I Experiment for the period 1 October 1967 to 31 March 1968.

This report supercedes a previous report publication for the same period (IHC-D-113.4/10) which should be destroyed.

The purpose of this report is threefold.

- a. To keep participating agencies and other interested organizations apprised of the current status of the COINS experiment.
- b. Establish bench marks for measuring subsequent activities.
- c. Serve as a means for collecting and presenting all papers related to the COINS I Experiment.

This report has been coordinated with and concurred in by all COINS Committee representatives from the participating agencies indicated below:



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PREFACE

With the exception of the diagrams, this entire report has been prepared on an electric typewriter equipped with a magnetic tape recording device. Entire typing jobs can be recorded magnetically and retyped automatically. Once a draft document has been typed and simultaneously recorded on magnetic tape, a revised copy can later be reproduced by automatically typing out the unchanged portion at 130 words per minute. Only the changes must be manually retyped.

Use of this device has expedited preparation of this report considering the number of revisions, corrections and reorganization required of the original draft.

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COMMUNITY ON-LINE INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM EXPERIMENT
(COINS)

Semiannual Report
31 March 1968

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COMMUNITY ON-LINE INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM EXPERIMENT
(COINS)

SEMIANNUAL REPORT
31 MARCH 1968

I. INTRODUCTION

I. This COINS Semiannual Report includes information on the status and progress of the COINS I Experiment for the period 1 October 1967 through 31 March 1968. A report dated 30 September 1967 includes information on COINS progress during the preceding six month period including descriptions and formats of participating agency files offered for the COINS Experiment. Other sections of the report are:

- II. MILESTONES. Brief summary of actions and accomplishments since the last report and covering the period through 31 March 1968. Includes a Gantt-type chart identifying tasks and estimated completion dates.
- III. COINS Committee. Information on the committee and its activities and topics which continue to engage the committee's attention.
- IV. Status of Previous Recommendations. Summarizes COINS Committee and Panel recommendations contained in the semiannual report of 30 September 1967, actions taken and current status.
- V. Current Recommendations. COINS Committee, Panel or participating agency recommendations contained in this report. There are no recommendations included at this time.
- VI. Reports from Participating Agencies on status, including current information on hardware and software status.

Included as appendices are:

Reports from ad hoc panels appointed by the COINS Committee to deal with discrete parts of COINS

Situation Reports to highlight specific problem areas in COINS.

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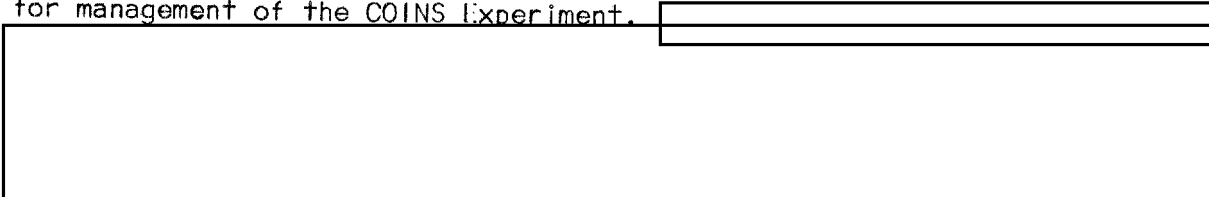
2. The COINS Experiment is being conducted by direction of the President to the Director of Central Intelligence to implement a recommendation of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB). The matter was referred to the Committee on Documentation for the U. S. Intelligence Board (CODIB) (now the Intelligence Information Handling Committee) which in turn appointed the COINS Committee to implement the system.* Current participants of the intelligence community are:

Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)
Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA)
Department of State
CIA (National Photographic Interpretation Center)
National Indications Center (NIC)
National Security Agency (NSA)

3. The system under development is an information storage, retrieval, and exchange system in which remote access computer systems of participating agencies (except State and NIC) are interconnected through a network "store and forward" switch to make selected files maintained in each system accessible for interrogation by users at all other agencies. State and NIC will have remote query consoles connected to the DIA system.

4. The COINS network concept is one of several computer network systems, a relatively new approach to information handling between remote points. Representative examples of other systems under development or planned are:

*Note: Since this report was drafted the Director of Central Intelligence has taken action to establish a different mechanism for management of the COINS Experiment.



At places within the report it has been possible to reflect this change but for the most part the information contained in this report has a cut-off date of 31 March.

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V. CURRENT RECOMMENDATIONS

This section, and that of future reports, will include any current recommendations of the COINS Committee, panels, or participating agencies which require consideration and action by the Intelligence Information Handling Committee, USIB or other authority.

There are no such recommendations in this report.

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VI. PARTICIPATING AGENCY REPORTS

Included in this section are reports submitted by the individual participating agencies describing internal agency activities relative to COINS . Subjects such as computer and communications hardware and software efforts, problems, recommendations, etc. are discussed.

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VI PARTICIPATING AGENCY REPORTS

I. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)

a. General:

(1) CIA is implementing internal on-line access to an in-house COINS file the week of 8 April but will not be ready to operate in the network until 13 May 1968. The change from an IBM 360/40 to an IBM 360/50 as the COINS computer has caused a delay in checking out the control unit which interfaces with a line to the switch.

(2) The COINS File Panel appointed by CODIB has recommended that one of the three original CIA files, Soviet Elite, continue in COINS, and suggested two others to replace the Chinese Location and Organization Dictionaries. The new candidates which have been prepared for COINS are a Soviet and Chinese Leader Appearance File and a File of Information on Travel of Soviets Abroad.

(3) Training in the CIA user language began the week of 1 April 1968.

b. CIA System Hardware (Figure 3)

COMPUTER: IBM 360 Mod 50; 512 K bytes of core storage
TAPES: Two 7-track units

*Seven 9-track units

CARD READ/PUNCH: One 2540

TERMINALS: *Five 2741 Typewriter Terminal

*Eight 2260 Visual Display Device (CRT)

One 2250 Mod 1 Visual Display Device
(Graphic Capability)

*One KSR-33 Portable Teletype Terminal

DISKS: One *2314

One 2311

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6. Department of State

No change in status since the report of
30 September 1967.

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PANEL REPORTS

The following appendices A through D are reports submitted by COINS Panels appointed by the COINS Committee to deal with discrete parts of the COINS I Experiment.

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COINS SITUATION REPORTS

Appendices E through H are a series of "COINS Situation Reports" prepared and published by the COINS Committee to highlight specific system problem areas, factors for consideration, alternative solutions, etc.

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APPENDIX H

Education of Users in the COINS Experiment
(COINS Situation Paper No. 4)

1. Current Situation

a. Each major participating agency (i.e., an agency having files and a computer system in the COINS network) is developing a training course or plans for users in their own agency as well as for users in other participating agencies.

b. In December 1967, DIA and NSA exchanged their first trial user oriented training courses which covered the following points:

(1) Detailed description of information contained in each file including such items as format, sources of information, date range of information and security classification, etc.

(2) Review of user manuals.

(3) Procedures for retrieving information from files using either specific "canned" programs, or users language.

c. The critiques following this exchange indicated that considerable work is required in development of user oriented courses and user manuals in the future.

2. Current Problems

a. Multiplicity of user languages means that users must be trained as multi-linguists (i.e., DIA/Query language, NSA/TILE and CIA/TORQUE).

b. Inability to agree on data standards for files in COINS means that users must learn a variety of codes, acronyms or abbreviations for:

(1) Referencing common fields in different agencies files

(2) Framing interrogations on common fields in different agencies files.

(3) Interpreting answers received from different agencies files containing common fields.

c. Each major participating organization is publishing and maintaining its own users reference manual. These manuals differ in format, style and terminology. As of this moment in time each user will have to maintain and be familiar with four different user manuals (i.e., DIA, CIA, CIA (NPIC) & NSA).

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d. Considerable difficulty is anticipated in keeping these users reference manuals updated with respect to file information (i.e., format, content, description, etc.) including descriptions of available specific "canned" interrogations for each file(s).

3. Alternatives: The necessity for cross agency training has been recognized and the following alternative courses of action have been proposed for consideration:

a. Each agency to send instructors to give training at each of the other agencies. These instructors might operate as a team.

b. Each agency to provide training to a few people in each of the other agencies, these people in turn to train potential users in their own agency on all other systems.

c. Each agency to develop computer-assisted instruction (CAI) as part of their local COINS system. The extent to which each agency develops its CAI capability will depend upon that agency's internal requirements.

d. Development of a single unified manual consistent in style and terminology.

4. Tentative Points of Agreement:

a. NSA will develop an open-ended machine format for assembling all of the descriptive information on the files in the COINS Experiment. Each participating organization will submit to NSA a magnetic tape containing the required descriptive information on each file in the agreed format and any subsequent updated information that may be required. NSA will prepare a master magnetic tape by consolidating the information submitted by each agency.

(1) A copy of this master magnetic tape will be distributed to all major participating organizations to serve as the common information base for their CAI capability.

(2) This file can be used to publish a common users reference manual on the data bases in the COINS Experiment and working aids (e.g., Index of data elements or data items, etc.).

b. Each of the major participating agencies has agreed to include a "computer assisted instruction" (CAI) capability in their systems. Initially this capability would complement existing user reference manuals. The long range goal being to replace user manuals with a CAI capability. At a minimum, the initial CAI capability in COINS Experiment should permit users to request the following information.

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COINS COMMITTEE:

Central Intelligence Agency	5
Defense Intelligence Agency	5
Department of State	5
Central Intelligence Agency (National Photographic Interpretation Center)	5
National Indication Center	2
National Security Agency	78

USIB AND INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION
HANDLING COMMITTEE:

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TOTAL 325

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Remarks: <p>The attached "Semi-Annual Report on the Community On-Line Intelligence System (COINS) Experiment" from the Information Handling Committee is being circulated to the USIB for information.</p> <p>Unless you or another member so request, the attached will not be scheduled for a USIB meeting and will be recorded as having been noted by the Board.</p> <p>5 requests received. Recorded 1 USIB-M-520, Secretary's Notes.</p>									
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